‘2-GUNS’ KINDLES A TRUE BROMANCE

WASHINGTON SAYS WAHLBERG MADE IT FUN. PAGE 16

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PAGE 10

Dating: This time, it’s OK to use labels

PAGE 18

A bit pitchy. As the popular FOX show enters its 13th season, it faces new challenges — exiting judges, a $250 million lawsuit, lower ratings — but will any of these concerns sway you from waiting for hours to sing in front of its producers? No way! PAGES 04-05

WILL YOU BE THE NEXT ‘AMERICAN IDOL’?

The crowd of those auditioning in Salt Lake City last month was big, but the crowd at Gillette Stadium this weekend could be even bigger. / CHRIS DETRICK, FOX

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1 NEWS

Top 3

What's trending at Metro.us

1 VIDEO: Porn sex vs. real sex explained with food

2 Don't hate on Paul Schrader's Lindsay Lohan movie 'The Canyons'

3 Playing the field: Girl gives oral sex to guy at volleyball game (NSFW)

Today's Local Tweet

"The views from Spectacle Island are perfect, sailboats, airplanes and Boston... Can't get any better"

@marissagrace_ 3m had a more serene Hump Day than the rest of us.

Prisoner steals a gun from officer, shoots him in leg

Noon shooting. A deputy sheriff was shot by a prisoner outside Mass. Eye and Ear Infirmary Wednesday.

Shots rang out at high noon Wednesday when a Middlesex County inmate shot a deputy sheriff in the leg at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary.

Police said two Middlesex County deputy sheriffs were removing the prisoner's handcuffs so he could be treated at the infirmary when he grabbed one of the officer's guns.

The two men fell to the ground, a round was fired and the sheriff suffered a shot to the leg.

"He began to struggle for the gun. It was a fight," Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis told reporters at the scene.

The second sheriff opened fire on the suspect and shot him in the chest.

"He's received a serious gun shot wound, and is in what we believe to be critical condition," Davis said. Both men were taken to Boston Medical Center to be treated for their injuries.

The emergency room was put on temporary lockdown and was reopened around 1:30 p.m.

There was no update on the prisoner's condition Wednesday, but Suffolk County District Attorney spokesman Jake Wark said that the deputy sheriff is expected to survive his injury.

"The inmate is more seriously injured and while I don't have specific information on his condition he is not expected to be arraigned [Wednesday]," Wark said in an email.

The inmate's name would not be released, Wark said, until it was clear he would survive his injuries.

Peter Miller said he saw the ordeal unfold before his eyes.

"There is nowhere safe you can go anymore," he said.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
morgan.rousseau@metro.us

Authorities blocked off the emergency room entrance after a shooting at Massachusetts Eye and Ear shortly before noon on Wednesday, July 31. / ERIN BALDASSARI, BOSTON METRO

Police: Woman tried to kidnap child from bus

A South End woman was in Cambridge District Court Wednesday for allegedly trying to kidnap a 5-year-old boy from a bus in Cambridge earlier this week.

Danyelle Abrams, 36, was charged with attempted kidnapping and two counts of assault and battery for allegedly grabbing the child by his waist after following him onto a Rte. 47 bus on Massachusetts Avenue.

Transit Police said Abrams first tried to engage the child in conversation while waiting for the bus to arrive. The boy's mother became uncomfortable, police said, and walked away from Abrams, but that didn't deter her.

Abrams continued to focus on the child, prompting family members to ask that she leave the boy alone.

Police said Abrams continued her disturbing behavior after boarding the bus. Family members demanded she leave the child alone, police said, but within moments Abrams snatched the child from his seat. An "altercation ensued," police said, and Abrams fled the bus. A warrant was issued for her arrest, and she was later arrested.

She was also charged with malicious destruction of property for allegedly kicking out the window of a Silver Line bus door Tuesday at Dudley station.

She was held on $2,500 cash bail and sent for a competency evaluation at Bridgewater State Hospital.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU

Police arrested Danyelle Abrams, 36. / MBTA TRANSIT POLICE

By the numbers

$2.5K

Abrams' bail

At large

Pair goes on overnight stealing spree in Saugus

Police are searching for two female thieves who hid out in a Saugus Macy's after closing time Saturday and, under the cloak of darkness, stole several articles of merchandise.

Saugus Police told Wicked Local that they were reviewing security tapes to identify the suspects, who left the store with a large shopping bag around 11 p.m.

It was unclear where the women hid to avoid detection, and what merchandise was taken, the report said.

METRO

For sale

Graves Island Light Station hits the auction block

Bidders can score a slice of Boston Harbor with the Graves Island Light Station, which is up for grabs on an internet auction site.

As of Wednesday, five people had entered bids for the legendary harbor location, offering up to $110,000 to buy the lighthouse, 10 acres of land on Graves Island, dock and oil house. The property is nine miles off the shore of downtown Boston and has two bedrooms but no bathrooms or running water. The auction ends Aug. 6. METRO

Bid now for the Graves Island lighthouse. / WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

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'IDOL' PROMISES

Thousands lined up earlier this month at the EnergySolutions Arena in Atlanta for a chance to become the next American Idol. / ANNETTE BROWN/FOX

Wait and sing. Ryan Seacrest and company take to the Foxboro this weekend, but will a show that's become so embattled get a crowd? Of course!

Twelve seasons of "American Idol" have shown that even if you beat the odds and win the competition, it's hardly a guarantee of success within the music industry.

The direct link to fame that the show seemed to initially provide has eroded, and the number of winners who fail to maintain success after their initial splashes is stifling. But that won't stop thousands of hopefuls from making the trip to Gillette Stadium in Foxboro — the only audition in the Northeast — on Friday and Saturday.

Neither will the fact that this past season was "American Idol"'s worst rated since the show began airing in 2002. In fact, it's doubtful that any of the difficulties that the show is facing will impact anybody who planned to set up camp outside of the stadium to audition for a group of strangers. (They don't sing for the celebrity judges you see on TV in the first few rounds.)

Let's review the current woes of the show: The judges' table will feature only one returning judge after feuding divas Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj and veteran Randy Jackson announced that they won't do another season. Executive producer Nigel Lythgoe was fired in June. And most recently, 10 former contestants filed a suit against senior executives last week, claiming that the show exploited the criminal backgrounds of African-American contestants to "publicly humiliate — with maximum fanfare — virtually every top-ranking black 'American Idol' contestant who had a record of arrest." It's doubtful that even this hint of public scandal will deter anybody who was already planning to audition this weekend.

Patrick Lynn, senior supervising producer of "American Idol," says he isn't able to comment on the lawsuit, but the exits and the ratings are of no concern to him.

"The ratings were up and down," he says, before pointing out, "the ratings for us were still up and down within the Top 10 [most viewed shows each week] — the Top 5 for us, even. So people can say what they want to say, but you know what? We're still a good show. People still like us. They love being a part of 'American Idol' and that's why they turn on."

Lynn has been with "Idol" since the show's inception, starting out as an associate producer.

The landscape for finding talent is more densely populated than it was in 2002. In addition to the rise of self-uploading technology on sites like YouTube, talent competitions like NBC's "The Voice" and "America's Got Talent" followed in the wake of "Idol's" success. This means it's more difficult for the talent to find an audience, no matter which show they choose.

Season 5 winner Taylor Hicks tells Metro that he is happy to have won when he did, because while "Idol" itself is competitive, now that the show has to compete with other competitions, it's even more of a challenge.

"I think

Patrick Lynn: Running the numbers

8,000

"We saw 8,000 people in Detroit. I'm not really sure about exact numbers, but maybe 3,000 in the other cities. There is a pretty good chunk of people trying out. One of the things that's good is that people understand you don't have to be first in line all the time, so that's why we are literally open for 36 hours. ... Out of 3,000 to 6,000 people, how many are going to actually get through? Literally 300, maybe 400 get through for the next round, which is the executive producer round, and then they make the decision if it's going to fit for TV. The [celebrity] judges see more people than you'd think though. They see 120 people and we do 60 a day. Then maybe 15 people [from each city] actually make it on the show."

Quoted

"I can only speak for myself when I say that the 'Idol' platform from which I came has allowed me to be able to work almost a decade in entertainment."

Taylor Hicks

And I am telling you I'm not going ...

You're doing it wrong, America!

Even the losers get lucky sometimes. Jennifer Hudson, pictured below, placed seventh in the Season 3. Not winning probably doesn't bother her much now. She's the only "Idol" alum to win an Academy Award and a Grammy. Adam Lambert, Katharine McPhee and Chris Daughtry also didn't win, but have all found success after their "Idol" tenures, arguably more success than the winners of their respective seasons.

PAT HEALY
pat.healy@metro.us

it is harder because the marketplace is saturated with similar shows," he says. "You have to work extremely hard at creating, making and sustaining your name. The show's gonna give you a name, but in this day and age, sustaining it is very tough."

But Lynn says what those other shows don't have is a legacy.

"The lucky thing that we have going for us is that there are people that have grown up with 'American Idol.' They don't know television without it," he says. "I have people telling me, especially 15-year-olds, [how excited they are] that they're finally old enough to try out."

Not everybody in the music industry seems to think this is a good thing.

In March, Dave Grohl told the in-flight magazine Delta Sky that he thought shows like "Idol" and "The Voice" were "destroying the next generation of musicians." His quote instantly went viral.

"I think about kids watching a TV show like 'American Idol' or 'The Voice,' then they think, 'Oh, OK, that's how you become a musician, you stand in line for eight f—ing hours with 800 people at a convention center and then you sing your heart out for someone and then they tell you it's not f—ing good enough,'" he ranted.

He then encouraged aspiring musicians to buy crappy instruments and take time to be bad at playing, but to have a good time doing so with friends, saying that's what happened with Nirvana.

Quoted

"Not everybody is going to be a superstar. But they're all Idols."

Lynn

A televised reality competition doesn't prepare musicians for the grimy side of business that they would see firsthand, slugging it out in the clubs and coming up through the traditional channels.

Hicks cautions anybody going out for a show like "Idol" now: "There's show and there's show business. Doing the show and performing is the easy part. The actual business of performing is a completely different monster, and I think nowadays you really have to be especially intuitive and smart about both of them or you'll get taken for the proverbial ride."

Lynn says watching firsthand as stars graduate from "Idol" to the music industry at large has been fascinating.

"Some winners become Carrie Underwood, and some become Lee DeWyze," he says, before clarifying that DeWyze shouldn't be deemed a failure because he hasn't had the mega success that Underwood has.

"Not everybody is going to be a superstar," he says, "but they're all Idols."

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Whitey trial. Prosecution wants to know if Bulger will take witness stand

With the defense team making its way through its witness list and moving closer to the possibility that James "Whitey" Bulger may testify, prosecutors demanded that they be told whether or not that will actually happen.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Fred Wyshak made the request in front of Judge Denise Casper before testimony began Wednesday in the trial of the 83-year-old mob boss.

"We're obviously in one of the final days. … I think the government deserves to know whether or not the defendant is going to testify in this case," Wyshak said. Prosecutors have made the request for that information earlier in the trial.

Casper said she planned to address the issue after Wednesday's testimony and wanted to give the defense more time to consider it after hearing from more of their witnesses. However, Wyshak didn't want to wait for the answer.

The countdown

By the end of day Wednesday, the defense team had called two more witnesses, bringing the total so far to four.

- Bulger's lawyer, J.W. Carney Jr., said that there are about nine additional witnesses left to call.

"He's had two months to make that decision," he said.

After Wednesday's testimony, Casper asked Bulger's lawyer, J.W. Carney Jr., to outline the remaining witnesses. After he named them, Carney was coy.

"That may not be the limit to the defense witnesses, your honor," Carney said, leaving everyone guessing whether Bulger will take the stand. Before the trial began, Carney had repeatedly said Bulger would testify. **MICHAEL NAUGHTON**

Finding Waldo has never been easier

Red-and-white-striped "Where's Waldo?" fans gathered at Coolidge Corner in Brookline Wednesday for the "Find Waldo 2013!" grand finale. The Waldo-themed costume party encouraged visitors to not only dress up, but to bring a camera and snap pictures of hidden Waldos for a chance to win prizes. The event was put on by The Brookline Booksmith. / ERIN BALDASSARI, METRO

Impatient robber

Woman tries to rob banks in Cambridge

Gas and tobacco taxes will increase today, and the 6.25 percent sales tax will be newly applied to certain computer systems services. The taxes go into effect at the stroke of midnight. The Department of Revenue is developing a Web page to inform people about the tax changes. **METRO**

Pay up

Gas, tobacco tax hikes take effect

State legislator-approved increases to gas and tobacco taxes took effect Wednesday.

The gas tax was raised three cents per gallon. Tobacco taxes vary, but a pack of 20 cigarettes was increased from $2.51 to $3.51. **METRO**

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PRISM. US releases declassified documents on surveillance programs

As Congress increasingly scrutinizes U.S. surveillance programs, the government on Wednesday, July 31, released declassified documents on the mass collection of telephone data in a rare glimpse into the world of intelligence gathering.

The Director of National Intelligence released three declassified documents that authorized and explained the bulk collection of phone data — one of the surveillance programs revealed by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden.

The "Bulk Collection Program" collected phone numbers and email addresses, but not the content. / GETTY IMAGES

The declassification was made in the "interest of increased transparency," the Office of the Director of National Intelligence said in a statement.

Much of what is contained in the documents has already been divulged in public hearings by intelligence officials as they sought to detail what was initially disclosed by Snowden.

The documents released on July 31 include 2009 and 2011 reports on the National Security Agency's "Bulk Collection Program," carried out under the U.S. Patriot Act.

In addition, they include an April 2013 order from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, which directed communications company Verizon to hand over data from millions of Americans' telephone calls and described how that data should be stored and accessed. **REUTERS**

Opinion

TOM FOREMAN

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT FOR CNN

CNN = POLITICS

THE UNSTOPPABLE WEINER ROAST

I was rushing though the St. Louis airport when a security guard said, "What's the hurry? Is Weiner finally dropping out?" We both laughed, I boarded my plane and then I started thinking about this idea that seems obvious to many voters: The former congressman is so badly damaged by his sexting scandal that he ought to resign from the New York mayor's race. And in fairly short order I came to a conclusion: If I were Anthony Weiner, I'd keep running.

I mean, why not?

Let's break it down. Sure, the polls are roasting Weiner at the moment (pun definitely intended), and while the numbers say Christine Quinn would probably trounce him if the vote were held today … um … it's not being held today. Weiner has weeks before people start pulling their levers, if you know what I mean, and in modern politics that is an eternity. Put it this way: A long shot is better than no shot, which is what he'll have if he quits.

Quoted

Weiner has weeks before people start pulling their levers, if you know what I mean, and in modern politics that is an eternity.

What about fundraising, you say? Money is always an issue in any political race, but Weiner came into this contest with almost $5 million in his war chest, and he's added to it since.

He could wind up squeezed in the home stretch (OK, that pun is intended, too), but for now it's more than enough to keep the ads rolling and the Twitter account cranking.

Decorum? Please. Shame is hardly the trump card it was in the 1920s, and once selfies of your "Little Lawmaker" have been emailed around the globe, what else is there to lose? I imagine there are some Germans in a Starbucks at this instant giggling over Berlinspritzer frappuccinos: "Frau Linkmeyer, look! Herr Weiner! Ha ha ha!"

Perhaps that's the bottom line. Many people think he should drop out to spare himself further humiliation, but there may be no pride to salvage here. Indeed, in modern politics the only embarrassment that seems to matter anymore comes from losing, and if he somehow avoids that, Weiner won't be tweeting.

He'll be crowing.

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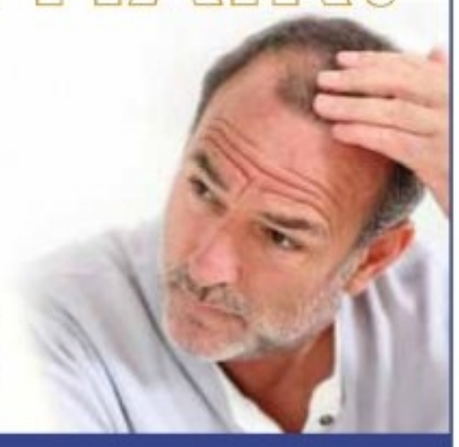

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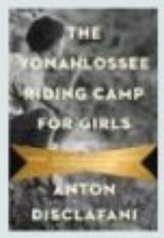
Your summer reading list

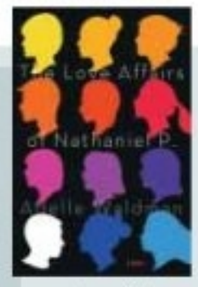
Whether you're spending your August lazing at the beach or, like the rest of us, trying to find the best spot on the couch to fully enjoy the air conditioner, a book is the perfect partner. We've taken the liberty of choosing a few titles for the dog days of August — pick up one of these to keep you company this month.

For a brisk, indulgent read:



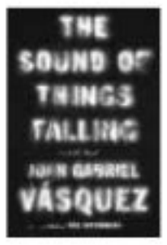
- The cover of **"The Widow Waltz"** by Sally Koslow — a woman staring at the surf — screams beach read. But the book is a different twist on the typical female-takes-on-the-world-in-heels story. Georgia Waltz's beloved husband, Ben, drops dead while jogging in Central Park, and their lavish life drips away as she discovers he left them penniless. **ALISON BOWEN**

- **"The Yonahlossee Riding Camp for Girls,"** a debut novel by Anton DiSclafani, takes place in 1930, on the cusp of the Great Depression. After a mysterious but disastrous family scandal, teenager Thea is sent away to a North Carolina camp filled with teen girls, some whose families' affluent fortunes are crumbling, some experiencing love and lust for the first time, some finding their fit in a changing society. **AB**



- **"The Love Affairs of Nathaniel P."** is a different kind of "it" book. Adelle Waldman's debut is a savvy, infinitely readable look into Nate P. — a 30-something, overeducated, slightly narcissistic New Yorker who hops from one smart, savvy woman to the next while happily sitting on his first book advance. It is a thing of infuriating beauty. **DOROTHY ROBINSON**

For an engaging, daring tale

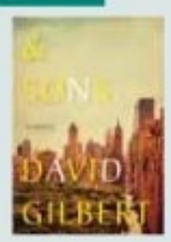


- Colombian writer Juan Gabriel Vasquez delves into his home country's history in **"The Sound of Things Falling,"** examining how the drug trade affected Colombians. Lawyer Antonio Yammara is reading about a hippo that escaped from drug kingpin Pablo Escobar's zoo and is transported back to when Escobar's cartel violence spilled over into everyday lives throughout the country, including a friend's assassination that Antonio witnessed. **AB**

- **"Submergence"** begins by plunging readers into a hellish, terrifying darkness — Brit James More has been captured by al Qaeda in Somalia. The novel tells of his love story with Danielle Flinders, a biomathematician studying life in the far-flung corners of the world. Scottish writer J.M. Ledgard's part love story, part spy novel is underscored by his skills as a writer for The Economist. **JULIA FURLAN**

- Sure, author Peter Stenson's debut novel follows a group of tweakers during a zombie apocalypse, but **"Fiend"** is much more. Stenson has a gift for capturing the drug-fueled anxiety that comes with meth abuse (he is a former user, now clean). Couple that with fleeing from mobs of flesh-eating creatures, and you have a heart-pounding summer read. **DR**

For a book to bring up at cocktail parties



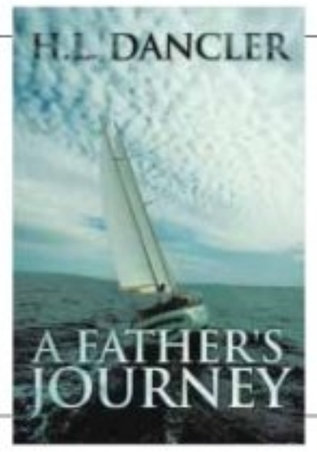
- Receiving buzz this summer is David Gilbert's **"& Sons,"** a tale of — you guessed it — a man and his sons. This family saga is set in the Upper East Side, where A.N. Dyer, eulogizing his best friend, becomes concerned with his own legacy. The book follows his three sons in New York, all confronting their own issues during a weeklong reunion. **AB**

- Najla Said, the author of **"Looking for Palestine: Growing Up Confused in an Arab-American Family,"** may have the kind of name that college students will immediately recognize — her father, Edward Said, is a regular on syllabi across the country. Her memoir of growing up amid literary luminaries and cultural influencers the world over is told in the voice of a self-confessed confused child looking for meaning. **JF**

- Much-discussed author Tao Lin returns with **"Taipei,"** which opens with Paul, a Brooklyn writer navigating the city's literary scenes and soon off on his own book tour, which leads him to the Taiwanese capital. Dipping into themes of purposeless adulthood, drug use and Internet-documented lives, the book is a slice of generational living. Lin called the book his "magnum opus," and he has acknowledged much was sourced from his own life experiences. **AB**

For doing a good deed

Author H.L. Dancler, a Massachusetts local, is donating all of the proceeds from his debut novel, "A Father's Journey," to The One Fund Boston. Anyone buying the book until Dec. 31 will know that 100 percent goes to the fund, he promises. The book is the first in a two-part series about a documentarian whose long absences from his Newport home affect his life. Dancler himself almost went to the marathon, but was visiting his youngest son instead.



2 CULTURE

What they're reading

CURTIS SITTENFELD: I loved Susanna Daniel's "Sea Creatures," about a young mother who accepts an unusual job for an eccentric artist.

ANA ORTIZ: I'm currently reading a book called "Beautiful Ruins." Someone gave it to me on the airplane, believe it or not, and I really like it. ... But the book that I'm going absolutely positively to read next is Junot Diaz's new book — it's a book of short stories.

"I'm reading a monster of a book, which is really a struggle because my time to read is when I get into bed, and in the evening when I put my daughter to bed and have dinner, at which point I'm shattered. It's '2666' by Roberto Bolano."
Sienna Miller

What they're reading

Lauren Weisberger:
"The Interestings" by Meg Wolitzer. I'm really loving it.

Jason Statham:
I'm reading a book called "Viva La Madness," by J.J. Connolly. He wrote "Layer Cake," which was made into a movie with Danny Craig. It's a great book. I think he's a brilliant crime writer. It's very good, very funny. It's a very witty book, brilliant.

Wayne Knight:
Currently I'm reading "Going Clear," a book [by Lawrence Wright] on L. Ron Hubbard, while belatedly reading the Steve Jobs book. I'm just kind of into people who are powerful people that not everybody likes. [Laughs] I'm trying to form a cult of personality — I want a reality-distortion field that works for me.

"Right now I'm reading 'Ancient Light' by John Banville and 'A Visit from the Goon Squad' by Jennifer Egan. Also, my nanny is currently writing a book about parenting, so I'm also reading that."
Debra Messing

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Agenda

More stuff to do

If we had to pick two panels, we'd check out Neal Adams' from-the-trenches account of the mid-twentieth century superhero renaissance at Secrets of the Silver Age and/or the Fables panel to find out where the writers of "Once Upon a Time" get all their ideas.

Collectable card game enthusiasts can pummel one another into submission with swarms of enchanted creatures in Magic: The Gathering tournaments.

But for casual fans, the true joy is gawking at costumed revelers while envying their geeky grit. (Cosplayers can't bring any real weapons, which is good — anyone who spends months on a Darkseid outfit to win cosplay supremacy won't take defeat gracefully. It's safer that his omega beams are just for show.

Here there be dragons (and a bunch of other nerdtastic creatures)

Want more?

Comic Con coverage online

Scope Metro's website for Q&As with Doyle, Boyle and the equally Bostonian co-founder of the Fanartica illustrator collective Ellen Crenshaw.

See more at www.metro.us

Just 'cos. This is Metro's geeked out primer to making the most of Comic Con.

Don't worry, these aren't real zombies — we don't think. / GETTY IMAGES

Those fanboys among us who couldn't afford to fly to San Diego two weeks ago for the real deal, rejoice: It's time (a few months later than originally planned) for Boston's version of Comic Con. Whether your all-encompassing obsession with comics preempted the start of your sex life, you think Batman and Superman are members of the X-Men or you're somewhere between those extremes, the nerdcon slated for this weekend at the Seaport World Trade Center should have something for you.

Con veterans likely already have a good idea what's in store, but — just in case you're not as well versed as we are — we put together a guide for newbs planning their inaugural venture into BCC.

If the prospect of ponying up $100 for a photo op with a pair of dwarves appeals to you, "Hobbit" stars Aidan Turner and Dean O'Gorman will be on hand to oblige. Autographs from the pair of Brits go for a more reasonable $40, as is the case with zombie hunter Laurie Holden (of "The Walking Dead") and human hunter Kristen Bauer Straten (of "True Blood"). We don't know how much godlike voice actor Billy West (of "Futurama" and pretty much every other cartoon, ever) plans to charge for his signature, but dude voiced Doug Funnie, Dr. Zoidberg, Zapp Brannigan and both Ren and Stimpy, so we'll probably pay him whatever he wants — and we're not necessarily ruling out sexual favors. (We're just kidding.)

The remaining roster of scheduled writers and artists ranges from eminent Big Two muckamucks to locals like Scott K. Monteiro and Liam Boyle, who recently funded their first book ("Rex Nocturnus") through Kickstarter.

For Somerville's Ming Doyle — who provided the neo-old school imagery for Image Comic's dystopic "Mara" — cons are the closest she gets to an office party.

"I really enjoy the opportunity to get out of my studio and interact in-person with my readers and co-workers. We all get to rub elbows," she says.

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Why so serious?

Interview. Denzel Washington and Mark Wahlberg talk about being funny in "2 Guns."

Denzel Washington is funny. He just doesn't do funny movies. People have told him how good he is with a joke. He agrees and he doesn't. "I'm quick. But being funny on purpose, take after take — I don't know. It's new territory." Indeed, he hasn't done a full-on funny film since the ghost comedy "Heart Condition," opposite Bob Hoskins in 1990.

"2 Guns" isn't a full-on comedy. It's a '70s-style throwback thriller, starring he and Mark Wahlberg as undercover government agents embroiled in the pursuit of a booty of stolen cash. But he and Wahlberg, longtime friends finally working together, have great chemistry, and the tone of the film allows them to goof around in between action scenes.

"Especially coming off 'Flight,'" Washington says, "I was looking to do something where I had more fun." Wahlberg had already been attached to the project, which was a big selling point for him. "Mark is not just funny, but he has a warmth and a heart."

Not that he wanted to go that far. "I'm not ready to be spanked yet, not right out of the gate," he says, alluding to Wahlberg's turn in "Ted." "But he helped free me up, to not worry about being silly."

Wahlberg was happy it wasn't the traditional kind of buddy comedy. "Usually they'll take the comedy guy and put him with the straight guy. We didn't want to do that," Wahlberg explains. "We felt like the two had to be really formidable opponents, to earn that camaraderie, to earn that trust in one another."

Asked how he handles comedy or drama, Wahlberg says there's little difference. "I approach everything the same: I try to make it as real as possible," he explains.

Fake credits

Don't trust the Internet Movie Database

Washington's IMDb page is riddled with films he wasn't in. "They have my first movie being 'Death Wish.' I wasn't even an actor then," he says, laughing. "It says I was an 'Alley Thug.' In 1974 I actually was an alley thug."

Real-life buds Denzel Washington and Mark Wahlberg team up for the thriller-comedy "2 Guns." / PATTI PERRET

Straight-faced

On Trayvon

"2 Guns" touches on real issues like crooked agencies and immigration. But Washington says it's not that serious.

"I saw 'Fruitvale Station' last night. It ain't that," he says. "My daughter said that the Zimmerman trial was the first time she's dealt with these issues in her life. ... For her generation, this is one of the first big civil rights moments."

MATT PRIGGE
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SLEAZY DOES IT

Bill Paxton (opposite Denzel Washington) is memorably terrifying in "2 Guns." / PATTI PERRET

Comic thriller. Denzel and Marky Mark are oddly compelling buddies in "2 Guns."

Like nearly everything that gets cranked out as summer movie entertainment these days, "2 Guns" is based on a comic book. But it's not that kind of comic. Steven Grant's source is a grounded, albeit still ridiculous, look at two undercover agents. It's not a stylish "Sin City" noir clone; Grant also writes comics spun from "CSI." The splashy, $90 million film version has less in common with anything currently in multiplexes, but plenty to do with the grim, sleazy, cheerfully pessimistic films Hollywood regularly and improbably cranked out during the 1970s. It's not one of those films itself, but it's closer than we deserve.

Denzel Washington and Mark Wahlberg play members of different agencies involved in taking down a Mexican drug cartel. Neither initially knows the other is undercover. One of the first acts in the film is for Wahlberg to shoot off the heads of various chickens buried up to their necks in dirt — which is how Sam Peckinpah's great "Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid" opens. Other gratuitous nods to the whiskey-soaked director abound, as do ones to "Charley Varrick," a crime saga led by a taciturn, cold-blooded Walter Matthau.

If the script, by "Brotherhood" creator Blake Masters, intimately understands these films and their world-weary vision, it doesn't feel compelled to recreate them completely. Our leads get embroiled in the convoluted pursuit of stolen bank money, which is desired by the Navy (led by James Marsden), the CIA (led by Bill Paxton) and the south-of-the-border cartel (led by Edward James Olmos). Olmos' character is the most exhausted, tired of being jerked around by his smug connections up north. But Paxton is the scariest. Never speaking above a whisper, and allowing his Louisiana-bred words to flow like molasses, he's not above murder, often by way of Russian Roulette focused on one's crotch.

But the tone, while weathered, is goofy. This is a comedy with no straight man. Washington and Wahlberg prove an oddly compelling duo, swapping quips and engaging in macho one-upmanship. Icelandic director Baltasar Kormakur ("Contraband") adopts a style that's part Walter Hill — all grizzled behavior and Ry Cooder-esque slide guitar scoring — and part Richard Lester. One grisly interrogation is amusingly set in a garage, where the sensor keeps turning off the light, forcing our leads to awkwardly swat around their arms to get it back on. The treatment of government agencies is incredibly cynical, even for a '70s throwback film. But the sense of humor tempers that. And though it falls apart during the climax, one has to love where the gobs of money — half the film's budget, mind you — ultimately wind up.

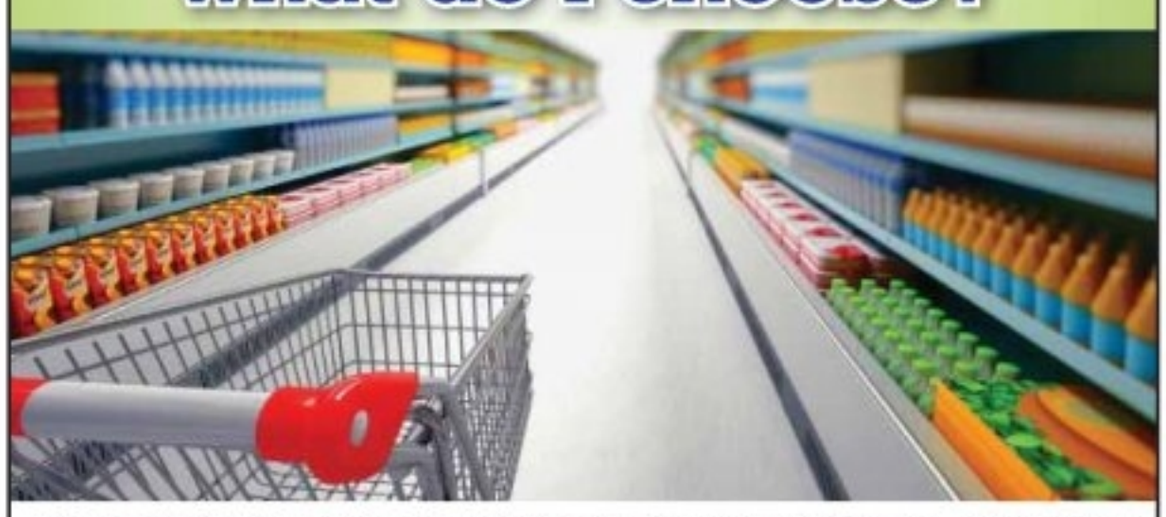
MATT PRIGGE
matt.prigge@metro.us

Review

'2 Guns'

- **Director:** Baltasar Kormakur
- **Stars:** Denzel Washington, Mark Wahlberg
- **Rating:** R

With so many options what do I choose?



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1 Stephanie Tanner is not back in rehab

How rude! That's probably what Jodi Sweetin (aka Stephanie Tanner) is saying to all the nosy journos going around writing that she's in rehab again, because former child stars try to use their characters' key catchphrases as often as possible — it helps remind people that they were once pretty famous and that the mess they've since made of their adult lives is whatever.

Jokes aside, the story of Sweetin's life post-"Full House" is actually a sad one. While the Olsen twins went on to rule the world from behind hundreds of layers of draped clothing and giant Starbucks cups, and Candace Cameron went on to find God, Sweetin (formerly the most adorable cast member of "Full House," and that includes John Stamos) went on to become a meth addict and a three-time divorcee. But she cleaned up her act, admirably, and seemed to be on the right track, working as a counselor at a rehab facility.

Which is why it really is pretty rude that she's now battling rumors (she's claiming they are 100 percent unfounded) that she, herself, is back on meth and back in rehab. Give the girl a break, you guys — the only cast member who fared worse after "Full House" called it quits is Dave Coulier (Uncle Joey). That guy sucked.

Jodi Sweetin played Stephanie Tanner on "Full House." / GETTY IMAGES

Justin Bieber got turned away at a club. / WIREIMAGE

THE WORD

Alexandra Cavallo takes on the world of gossip.

ALEXANDRA CAVALLO
@AlexCavallo
alexandra.cavallo@metro.us

2 Bieber is not up in da club

Oh man, I almost feel sorry for Justin Bieber. Almost. But then I think about what a little douche that twerp is, and all the money he's probably got piled up in a mansion-sized McDonalds ball pit that he rolls around in every night — shirtless — like Scrooge McDuck, and I don't feel all that sorry.

It's pretty clear, though, that Baby Biebs' (ahem, excuse me, Young Adult Biebs) star is on the swift wane. Not only is the poor kid getting booed off the same stages from which he once received the panties of crazed young ladies, but now the guy can't even get into a club in the Meatpacking District.

And, as anyone who lives in NYC will tell you, any bro with a fat wallet and $30 worth of hair gel on his person can get into a club in the Meatpacking District.

Not Bieber, however, according to a TMZ report. Allegedly, Bieber was turned away for being 19 (understandable), though I'm pretty sure it's because nobody's interested anymore.

It's kind of like when your adorable babies grow into annoying, not adorable teenagers and all you want to do is give them up for adoption, and also not let them into trendy New York bars.

3 Camera-shy guido

Speaking of Joe Giudice, here's another juicy tidbit about everyone's favorite greased up Jersey meatball. Joe, not exactly known for being a paragon of class and decorum (or a guy with a firm grasp on the English language) flew into a rage outside of a Newark courtroom on Tuesday and swatted his big, meaty fists at a photog.

Joe G is such an oaf that he makes the rest of the Jersey Househusbands look like freaking aristocrats, so it's no real surprise that he was unable to restrain his roid rage when a cameraman stuck his lens up in his business.

However, if you're reading this Joe (just kidding, I know he can't read), I would like to opine that public displays of violence while already in trouble with the law is a bad look for you.

TERESA GIUDICE AND HER HUSBAND JOE GIUDICE / GETTY IMAGES

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Play time

Sure, they can be a pain when it comes time to using the bathroom, but rompers have become an essential part of the summer wardrobe. What other item is perfect for sprawling out carefree on a picnic blanket and then totally chic when paired with heels for cocktails at sunset? Here are a few we love.

1

Juicy Couture

Polka-dot romper, $158, www.juicycouture.com

2

Yumi Kim

Liz romper, $196, www.yumikim.com

3

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Haute Hippie

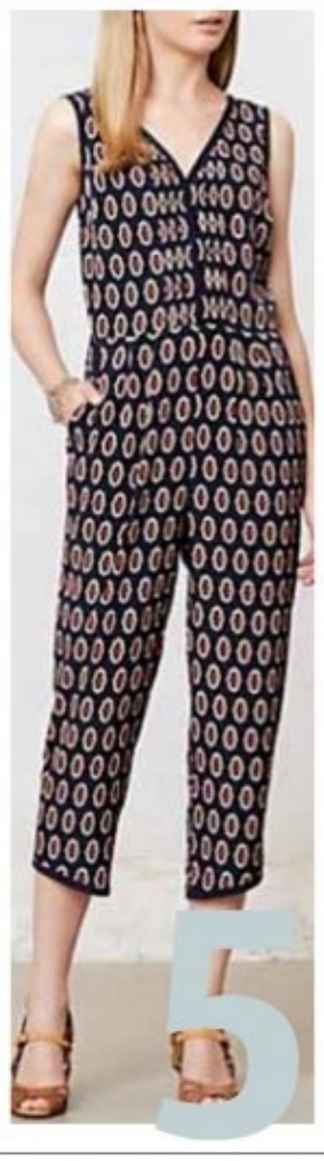
Chambray romper, $235, www.shopbop.com

TINA CHADHA
tina.chadha@metro.us

5

Samedi

Romper, $88, www.anthropologie.com



6

Motel Mary

Lace romper, $90, www.urbanoutfitters.com

7

ASOS

Romper in tribal print, $47.52, www.asos.com

PLUS

Editor's pick

Yarok Feed Your Sunshine

Our favorite aspects of summer — the pool, the ocean, the sun — can wreak serious havoc on our hair. Toss those elements on top of hair that's been dyed, treated and styled, and you've got a perfect storm for damage. Enter: Feed Your Sunshine serum by Yarok, part of a line of vegan, organic, all-natural hair care products containing responsibly sourced ingredients. The blend of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and oils — found in ingredients like black currant seed oil and organic aloe vera — turned our hair from straw to silk. MEREDITH ENGEL

$26, WWW.YAROKHAIR.COM.

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GET READY TO GO STEADY

Funky Brown Chick

TWANNA A. HINES, M.S.

AWARD-WINNING EDUCATOR AND SEX COLUMNIST. FOLLOW HER ON TWITTER @ FUNKYBROWNCHICK

Being clear and honest about your intentions will make "the talk" much easier. / GETTY IMAGES, POLKA DOT RF

Here's the deal: We have fairly rigid ideas about how to have "the talk." It usually goes something like this: Person X and Person Y hang out. Repeat as necessary. Things begin to feel serious; either X or Y wonders whether or not the relationship is exclusive:

"Hmmm, is my guy/gal seeing other people? Will they be pissed off if I do?"

It's go time to DTR (define the relationship). You have a conversation about couplehood — but there's a problem. Although we're often confronted by smiling pairs of the opposite sex and same ethnicity couples in toothpaste commercials and TV shows, we don't necessarily have strong guidance regarding how to conduct healthy, affirming dialogues about relationships that do not fit neatly inside the one-size boxes that are supposed to fit all relationships. Here's how to talk about monogamy (or non-monogamy) in a way that respects all parties.

Dos and Don'ts

- **DO** realize you are an important participant in the conversation — so show up! You are most likely to find a partner who will value your desires and intentions when you express them honestly.
- **DON'T** say what you think the other person wants to hear. Say what you mean.
- **DO** acknowledge the difference between privacy and secrecy. Privacy is what you do without your partner's knowledge. Secrecy is willfully keeping information from your partner that should likely be revealed. Fantasizing about having sex with an ex is a private thought. Hooking up with your ex while maintaining a facade of monogamy with your current partner is a secret action.
- **DON'T** forget "the talk" should be an ongoing conversation — things change.
- **DO** be explicitly clear to avoid misunderstandings. For example, if you say you want to "open up" the relationship, discuss whether that means you'll independently see other people or collectively agree to add partners to your relationship.
- **DON'T** assume your partner doesn't share your desires. Maybe they want a monogamous relationship, too. Maybe neither of you do.
- **DO** understand that we often become aware of boundaries only after we've brushed against them. While you or your lover might believe you are comfortable with a particular decision, feelings might change once actions are taken.
- **DON'T** forget that the possibilities are endless. Your relationship can be whatever you and your bed buddy want it to be.

Talk first, tryst later. DIGITAL VISION

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DRUNK HISTORY: MENOTOMY'S COCKTAILS COME WITH COCK-TALES

Thursty

LUKE O'NEIL
@LUKEONEIL47

A lot of bars and restaurants pay lip service to the roots of their neighborhood, but for Billy Lyons, the owner of the new Menotomy Grill in Arlington, history is a passion. The Arlington native has been planting the seeds for his concept since he wrote the business plan — and joined the local historical society — six years ago. "I said to myself, if my dream ever comes true, I don't want to be accused of exploiting history to make a buck," he jokes.

An appreciation for Arlington's long history shows up in touches throughout the restaurant, with old maps and photos adorning the walls. The name itself is a call back to the original settlement within the borders of Cambridge. This is by no means a period-harkening setup, however — Menotomy is decidedly modern, with a spacious, distressed-industrial-chic design. It feels like Lyons has smuggled a small piece of the city out beyond its borders.

"I wanted to bring a Boston restaurant and bar to the suburbs," he says. He's the man to do it. Lyons has a few decades of experience in the business — he's worked everywhere from Boston Beer Works to Stoddard's Fine Food and Ale, whose chef (Mark Thompson) he brought along. "It's not your typical suburban restaurant," he says. "I basically brought the things most people in the suburbs haven't seen yet."

Menotomy provides a break from suburban monotony. / ERIN BALDASSARI

Quoted

"I wanted to bring a Boston restaurant and bar to the suburbs."

Billy Lyons, the owner of the new Menotomy Grill in Arlington

Among these revelations for suburbanites are cocktails like the Cooper's Flip, which has one foot in the past, one in the present. Made with the locally made Privateer Rum, molasses, egg, pumpkin puree and cask ale, it's a cocktail Lyons has known he wanted on the menu since he first dreamed up the concept. Its name is a reference to two men who were killed at a bar in the area by British soldiers during Revolutionary times, a story Lyons heard from a historian in town.

Similarly, the Bloody Russell — made with brandy, Cointreau and blood orange juice — takes its name from the nearby Jason Russell House, the site of the bloodiest battle on the first day of the Revolutionary War.

While there's nothing particularly revolutionary about this new spot's concept, its fine cocktails and pleasing comfort food — served up in a hip, vibrant space — elevated Arlington's bar scene the day that it opened. You can write that down for the history books.

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Top 3 trending online

1 'Meet the owner of the smallest penis in Brooklyn'

2 'We're going to need a bigger DVR — check out our Shark Week preview'

3 'The "Breaking Bad" cast talks the final eight episodes (tear)'

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Sept. 29
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Father John Misty

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with Kate Berlant
Oct. 20
Somerville Theatre
(On sale Friday)

Father John Misty / PROVIDED

John Legend

with Tamar Braxton
Oct. 22
Citi Wang Theater
(On sale Friday)

'Anything We Want': Fiona Apple & Blake Mills

Oct. 23
Citi Colonial Theatre
(On sale Friday)

Fitz and The Tantrums

Oct. 28
House of Blues
(On sale Saturday)

Neutral Milk Hotel

Jan. 16 and 17
The Orpheum
(On sale Friday)

Although Ozzy Osbourne has sang the words to Black Sabbath songs, it was bassist Geezer Butler who has always written those words for the singer. Famously, Ozzy hasn't always understood them. Butler shares with a laugh that this dynamic still holds true today with the semi-reunited lineup's new album, "13," which to everyone's surprise, including the band members themselves, reached No. 1 on the charts — a first for the doomy hard rock band.

How does it feel to integrate these new songs with such classics?
It's good because we sort of wrote them in the same vein as we did the first three albums. So, they've been mixing pretty well.

A lot of the imagery that I'm seeing promoting the tour is that pilot with the mask from the "Never Say Die" album, which was the last full album with Ozzy back in the day. What was the reason for that?
I think probably seeing it on Iron Man in "The Avengers." That was sort of great because Robert Downey Jr. had that particular T-shirt on, so we saw that there was a particular amount of interest and it became a top-selling T-shirt in England, so we thought, "Cash in on it!"

What was recording like during those 1978 sessions? I would imagine it was a bit different from this time.
It wasn't good. That's why we don't really do anything from that album. We don't have very fond memories of that. We sort of didn't have any money. We had been fighting legal battles for two or three years and spent all the money on that, trying to get away from the management. And the band was in a really bad place at the time. So we basically sort of suffered because of that.

I'd imagine there were also a lot more drugs in the studio then, too.
Well, there was none this time. With the first three albums, we didn't have any drugs, we couldn't afford drugs anyways. With the second one, we didn't really have any time to do it. Maybe the third time we might have had a few spliffs here or there. Drugs didn't really kick in until about "Vol. 4." ... But this time, we just thought, "Let's get back to the basics, what we're good at, and do it that way." ... We approached it as a live gig in the studio.

And it worked, apparently. You scored your first No. 1 album more than 40 years after your first album. That's never happened with any band before.
Yeah, it totally flabbergasted us. We really didn't expect No. 1. We thought it would do reasonably well, but if someone asked me the week before if I thought we'd have a No. 1, I would have said [there was] absolutely no way.

Black Sabbath lyrics have always dabbled in darker territory, but this time instead of fascination with the occult, it seems like there's a lot of grappling with your own mortality.
Yeah, especially after Ronnie died. [Ozzy's replacement in 1979 was singer Ronnie James Dio, who had been singing again with the Sabbath members at the time of his death under the band name Heaven & Hell.] When Ronnie died of stomach cancer, it sort of brought the whole mortality thing home very much. You expect your parents to die and stuff like that, but when one of your workmates dies, it's a totally different feeling. And then when Tony [Iommi, guitarist] was diagnosed with cancer, it was like, "What else is going to happen to us?" So, all of the lyrics were reflecting that.

Explain how it works with the lyrics, and Ozzy's input.
Ozzy always came up with the vocal lines and usually Bill [Ward, bassist, who is not touring with the reunited lineup] comes up with a title for the song, and I'll fill out the lyrics. It's always the last thing to go on.

I remember that legendary anecdote about after you guys had recorded "Paranoid" and Ozzy asked what the word meant. Is that true?
Yes. [Laughs].

Anything like that happen this time around?
Oh yeah, he can't pronounce zeitgeist. We have a song called "Zeitgeist" on the album and Ozzy could never remember the word.

It's interesting with him not writing the words, he seems to really get into what you're trying to get across. Do you ever have to coach him on things like that?
No, the thing is, what you have to do with Ozzy, he comes out with the vocal line and then you have to write the lyrics like literally syllable by syllable. So, you have to fit everything into exactly what he says. And melodies, that's the hardest part really.

PAT HEALY
pat.healy@metro.us

It's gettin' odd in here

Sabbath kitty sabbath

On Butler's personal website, he has adorable photos of his many cats. This doesn't seem very Black Sabbath, but what is even less Black Sabbath is that they're all named after rappers!

"Chingy was the first; Chingy and Nelly," recounts Butler. "Because we used to live in St. Louis, so we were naming them after St. Louis rappers and then kept adding to the family. So, then we had to expand outside of St. Louis and that's where Snoop and Biggie and Em came from."

If you go

Black Sabbath

Aug. 12
Comcast Center
885 S. Main St., Mansfield
$48-$151, 800-745-3000
www.livenation.com

Also onstage

Wavves

Aug. 1, 9 p.m.
The Paradise
967 Comm. Ave., Boston
$15, 800-745-3000
www.ticketmaster.com

Wavves, aka Nathan Williams, splashed on to the indie scene in 2009 with the generation-defining punk pop gems "No Hope Kids" and "So Bored." Then came the inevitable tabloid-esque rock media backlash, but the funny thing is, the kid never stopped making good music in that pure, 1990s-style, big, distorted, hooky verse-chorus-verse mold, which he's probably the best at since the late, lamented Blink-182.

Nathan Williams is the man who makes Wavves. / PROVIDED

Also onstage

Bad Things

Aug. 1, 9 p.m.
Great Scott
1222 Comm. Ave., Boston
$10-$12, 800-745-3000
www.ticketmaster.com

This L.A. band has gained some notoriety for having snowboard wunderkind Shaun White on lead guitar, but if their music wasn't good, who'd care? And it is good — a shimmering, panoramic, anthemic sound imbued with that lackadaisical-yet-somehow-also-intense vibe only Californians can pull off. Lead single "Caught Inside" is ideal for laid-back midsummer driving with nowhere to go and the speakers turned to 11.

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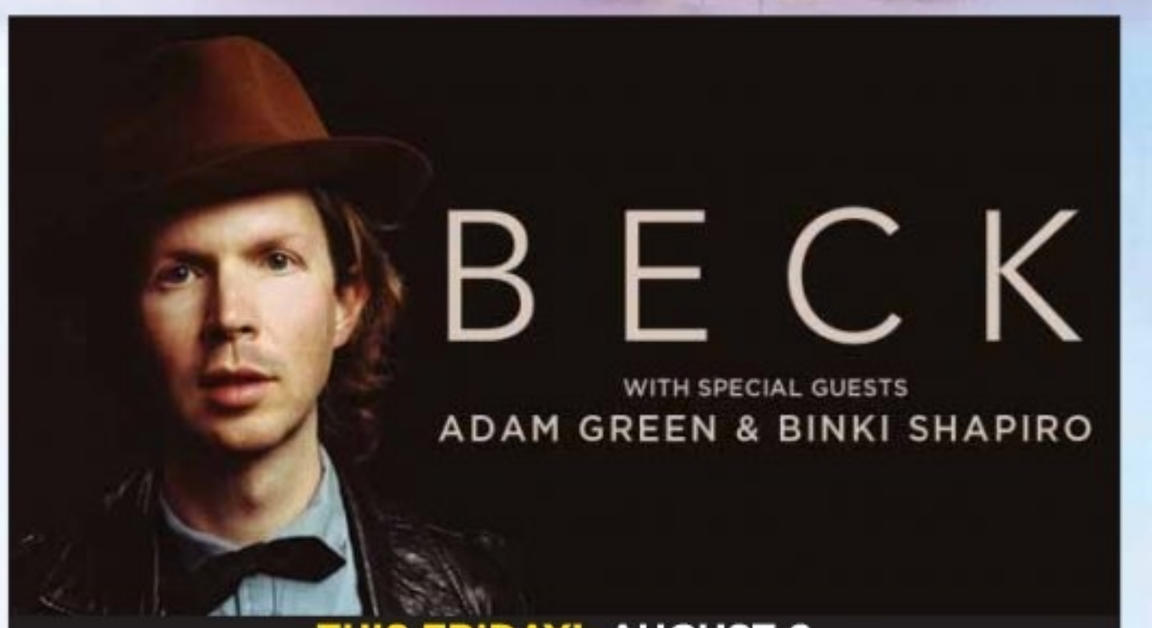

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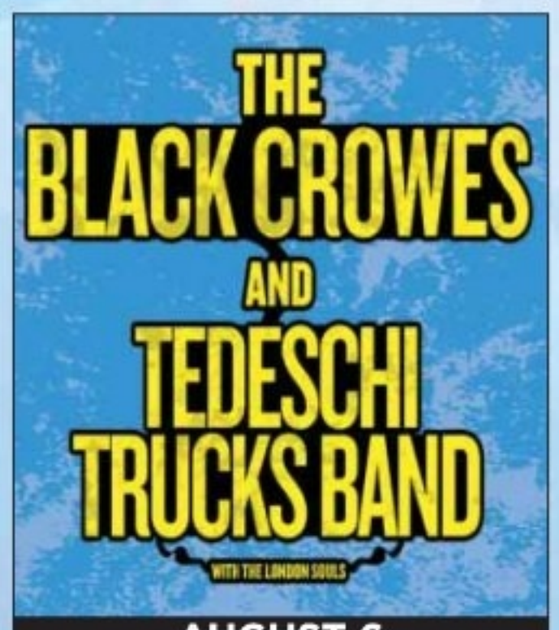

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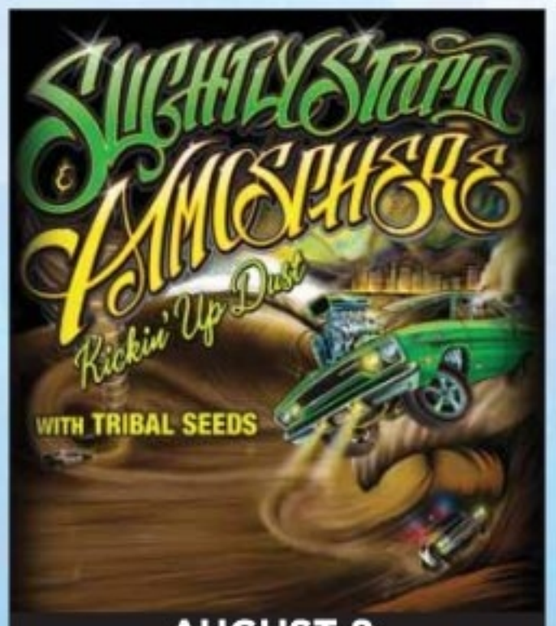

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Train Spotting: Adam Cupples at Stony Brook Station

Anyone who's ever wondered about the inner workings of a craft beer manufacturer should hop the Orange Line to one of the largest in the nation, conveniently situated a mere few blocks away from Stony Brook Station, to quench that thirst for knowledge. Also, as one might expect, there's plenty of beer to be consumed at the Samuel Adams Brewery in JP. We've been told that many people enjoy beer. Furthermore, Sam Adams and its seasonal renderings typically taste a great deal better than the 40 ounce bottles of malt liquor to which so many of us have grown accustomed. When we dropped by, tour guide Adam Cupples told us that cost-free journeys through his workplace come with info morsels tailored for everyone from 30-year veterans of home brewing to craft beer novices.

Adam Cupples is your go-to guy for beer factoids. / PROVIDED

That's Paul Revere on the Sam Adams label, right? Why not call it Paul Revere beer?
We get that one fairly often. It's pretty well-documented that Sam Adams was not a pretty man, and because of that, people often think that the man on the label is Paul Revere. But it is Sam. Our art department took a little mercy, cleaned up his chin line, and made him look a little more studly. Because of that, people get a little confused.

Wait a sec. Paul's Revere's presence on the Sam Adams label is a myth?
The portrait of Sam is done in a very traditional style of how portraits were done at the time, and there's a very similar Paul Revere portrait in that same style where he's holding a silver stein, because if I'm not mistaken, he was a silversmith. I think the very traditional setting in that picture has led to some questions, but it's Sam. We just made him a little prettier.

A few months ago, "Fox and Friends" complained about a character in a Sam Adams commercial who talked of the Declaration of Independence without mentioning the "endowed by their creator"

line. Does it make you proud to work for a company that irritated Fox News?
As far as advertising goes, the bottom line is we have certain guidelines that ourselves and other brewers agree to adhere to. We're trying to sell craft beer. It's a little surprising when you get bogged down in other things. But our real focus is the beer, and that's how we move forward, [by] focusing on brewing great craft beer.

I think Fox News are jerks.
You would probably have more insider information on that than I would. BARRY THOMPSON

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THEATER

'Cinderella'

Aug. 1-4
The Strand Theatre
543 Columbia Road, Dorchester
$15-$25, 617-635-1403
www.bostonoperacollaborative.org
The Boston Opera Collaborative presents Rossini's 1817 adaptation of the classic fairy tale, which eliminates the supernatural elements from the story, not because of some desire for realism on Rossini's part, but due to a lack of a special effects budget. Instead of a fairy godmother, Cinderella is helped by the prince's tutor, a philosopher named Alidoro. Weird, huh?

'Wicked'

Aug. 7-Sept. 15
Boston Opera House
539 Washington St., Boston
$50-$250, 800-745-3000
www.broadway.com/boston
Seems like it was not long ago that this 2003 Broadway behemoth last visited Boston, but as they say, witches never learn. "Wicked" remains one of the best pieces of fan fiction ever, with original author Gregory Maguire cleverly appropriating the Oz universe as a postmodern front to explore ideas of morality, public shame and the weird love between "frenemies."

'Odysseo'

Aug. 7-Sept. 1
Assembly Row
201 Assembly Square, Somerville
$35-$220, 866-999-8111
www.cavalia.net
From one of the co-founders of Cirque du Soleil comes a similarly artsy type of circus show celebrating the relationship between man and horse. Naturally, there's a focus on spectacular equestrian feats.

MOVIES

'Annie Hall'

Aug. 5, 7 p.m.
Coolidge Corner Theatre
290 Harvard St., Brookline
$10, 617-734-2500
www.coolidge.org
"Annie Hall" proved that Woody Allen could tug heart strings just as well as he could hit funny bones and, moreover, that he could do both at once without sacrificing either. Plus, he made a convincing leading man out of a goofy-looking, existentially anguished nerd, and if that's not movie magic, we don't know what is.

ART

'You Are Here: Maps and Art'

Aug. 3-18
Nave Gallery, Clarendon Hill Presbyterian Church
155 Powderhouse Blvd., Somerville
Free, info@navegallery.org
www.navegallery.org
Once contained only in unwieldy atlases or on great big sheets of paper that are impossible to fold up the same way they were unfolded, maps are more present than ever in our lives thanks to Google and GPS machines. But what are they, and how do they affect our idea of place? That's the question at the heart of this 25-artist strong exhibition.
MATTHEW DINARO

THEATER

'EEP! Show'

Aug. 1-17, Thursday through Saturday, 8 p.m.
Boston Playwrights' Theatre
949 Comm. Ave., Boston
$15, 617-353-5443
www.newexhibitionroom.org
In "EEP! Show," the only limit for a young girl is her own imagination. Her toys come to life to help her begin to explore who she is and what she might want to become. A fantasy of play, pop music and America's most iconic woman, "EEP! Show" is NXR's latest original devised theatrical event.

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FROM SPAGHETTI TO SASHIMI

Uni Sashimi Bar, the Eliot Hotel's small lower-level eatery, provides a great escape from the sweltering summer weather (we're still recovering from last week's heat wave). They keep the restaurant's AC cranked up high — but it's not just for the patrons' comfort. It preserves the precious raw fish's delicate oils and ensures that each dish is served as fresh as the day it was caught.

"It may sound funny, but we keep the temperature low because the fish are more comfortable," says chef Tony Messina, who took over the kitchen last September. He's currently designing new summer dishes, which he road tests on the nightly omakase — a chef's tasting menu subject to Messina's whim, which is subject to seasonal produce. "It gives diners the full breadth of what's on offer," he says. "It goes from lighter flavors to heavier, to dessert, so it's like a traditional tasting menu."

Uni's culinary aesthetic might seem like a far cry from the 32-year-old's East Boston Italian roots, but Messina's career route has taken him on a similarly exploratory trajectory. His time in the kitchens of Legal Seafoods, Alta Strada and Menton eventually led him to Lincoln's French/Japanese split AKA Bistro, where former Uni chef Chris Chung tutored him as his assistant.

"It's certainly not pasta," Messina says of making sashimi. "That said, I am bringing some of my Mediterranean roots. I see Uni's as a global menu that might have elements of Europe or North Africa. It's fun. It's very fun for me to do. I get bored easily and it's perfect for me because I don't sleep much."

So, instead of counting sheep, "I lie there thinking up my next sauce for raw fish."

Quoted

"I see Uni's as a global menu that might have elements of Europe or North Africa. It's fun."

Uni Sashimi Bar Tony Messina

Chef Tony Messina carefully plates a dish. / ERIN BALDASSARI

If you go

Uni

370 Comm. Ave., Boston
$30-$125
617-536-7200
www.unisashimibar.com

NOSH ON LINDA LABAN
linda.laban@metro.us

On the menu

Summer omakase

Ankimo with wild ginger, nori, samphire. "Monkfish liver is a traditional dish usually with yuzu and daikon. I like the ginger element and samphire adds that crispness. It's the foie gras of the sea," he says.

Toro with banana glass, black truffle vinaigrette and pork belly croutons. "The banana looks difficult, but it's just tapioca cooked until soft then pureed with banana, then laid out on a tray in a dehydrator."

Uni's famous Uni spoon of sea urchin, quail egg yolk, caviar. "I doubt this will ever leave the menu, but I do it with smoked sea urchin. It's more fun and it's more me."

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The art of the xiao long bao, a Shanghai style soup-filled dumpling, is a tricky one to master. Some say the dough should be folded 18 times before being molded into the little broth-filled pouch. This ensures that subtle, pliant give when you perch the dumpling on your spoon, then nibble, slurp and devour away. The meat must be tender, the broth hot, the skin paper-thin but strong. Dumpling Cafe's versions are all of these things, and the expert technique in the kitchen is immediately apparent once they arrive on the table. Those who find the perfect xiao long bao outside of China usually swear their loyalty right there and then, and no one in Boston has the following of xiao long bao warriors that Dumpling Cafe does.

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*Source Scarborough R1, 2013

Horoscope

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22.
Lady Luck is apt to be kinder to you if you're trying to pull off something major, so don't waste time on trivial pursuits. Regardless of the nature of your work, elevate your efforts.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22.
You should give top priority to developing a second source of income. Chances are you'll be extremely lucky if you apply yourself toward projects of this ilk.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22.
Good things could happen if you associate with as many dynamic individuals as you can. Seek companions who are positive, productive and enthusiastic.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21.
Great rewards could come from situations where you draw upon resources and/or talents of others rather than just your own. Be sure to share the windfall.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21.
Persons with whom you enjoy good social relationships will point you in some interesting directions. If you're in need of a special favor, buzz them first.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan 20.
Be persistent when it comes to financial matters, because whatever you touch could turn into gold. These opportunities have good bottom lines.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb 18.
If a project in which you're presently involved has been too loosely woven to be effective, take it upon yourself do something about it.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20.
You're in a unique cycle where ways can be found to increase your earning potential. However, it'll be up to you to utilize your creativity and imagination toward these ends.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20.
Take advantage of your promotional skills, which are likely to be outstanding — this is especially so if you are trying to advance an issue that you feel strongly about.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21.
Let your generosity prevail when you see a needy party whom you could easily help if you wanted to. It's possible you'll get back twice as much as you give, but perhaps in an unexpected way.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20.
Should you get involved in a group endeavor, chances are you'll be a positive catalyst. You could prove to be lucky.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22.
Your instincts to succeed could be more acute than usual, making success for you far more likely once you get a chance to clarify your objectives and motives. BERNICE BEDE OSOL

Letters

Not all news is bad news

Re: 'Woman seeks truck for bombing hero' (Metro, July 24) Morgan Rosseau, I wanted to thank you for the article you wrote about Carlos Arredondo. You brought attention to a wonderful man.

Media can work in good ways sometimes, and you reached out and did that. You have a amazing heart and Boston Metro is very lucky to have you.

LORI TOSCHES, VIA EMAIL

Weiner's lost the public trust

Re: 'Of vice and men' (Metro, July 31) I think the letters responding to letter writer Owen Duncan's original statements disregard a key point. Weiner's sexting habit continued after his 2011 resignation, which discredits his apology. Cheaters can certainly still make brilliant public officials, but public office requires a great deal of credibility; Anthony Weiner has lost his.

ANTHONY P. FARRELL, VIA EMAIL

Job-seeking for teens is futile

Re: 'How to get your child off the couch and into a summer job' (Metro, July 30) Your article was disappointing and way off the mark.

I've been a youth worker for approximately 10 years and we've fought against a steady decline in the number of summer positions available to teenagers. If you'd done a little research, you'd have known this. The "follow these steps" tone of your article is setting teenagers, and their parents, up for failure. Even as our economy tries to recover fully, adults are still give preference in jobs traditionally held by teens, i.e., retail and fast food. It was especially disappointing to read your article after PBS' Newshour aired a thoughtful and well-researched piece on teen employment, the benefits and struggles recently.

TYROME THOMAS, VIA EMAIL

letters@metro.us

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact info.

Sudoku: Easy and hard

9				1		7		
	3		7					
7	1				6	2		3
	2				1		4	
	9		5	6	4		1	
	6		8				7	
5		1	9				2	6
					5		9	
		9		4				8

	4	2		3	8		9	
7			6					
	1	3	7				6	
		4	3				5	
	2			5			1	
	7				9	6		
	6				3	5	7	
					5			6
	5		8	1		9	3	

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Crossword

Across
1 Pet shop buy
6 No-fat Jack
11 Water-power org.
14 Loos or Bryant
15 Ms. Massey of old films
16 Farm animal
17 Slugger Rod —
18 A bright star
19 Summer, in Savoie
20 Globe substitute
22 A number of times
24 Laird's music
28 Pina —
29 Spain and Portugal
30 7UP alternative
32 R&B's — Braxton
33 Auditorium guide
35 Loud noises
39 Ancient Dead Sea kingdom
40 Not pro
41 Book jacket part
42 Caboose's spot
43 Panasonic rival
45 Resembling
46 Address the crowd
48 Verified
50 Opinionated
53 Most profound
54 Set jewels, e.g.
55 Mountain pools
57 Frankenstein milieu
58 To the point
60 Chose
65 Size above med.
66 Prince Val's wife
67 Capital of Tibet
68 Da or ja
69 Brief flash
70 Spicy mustard

Down
1 Insect resin
2 Actress — Hartman
3 Balloon filler
4 Sault — Marie
5 Michener novel
6 Edge past
7 Tearful request
8 Howard and Reagan
9 "Wheel of Fortune" buy (2 wds.)
10 Major no-no's
11 Sweater letter
12 Cast a ballot
13 Booster rocket
21 Vulcan high priestess
23 Beach sandal (hyph.)
24 Bad dog
25 Shack or mansion
26 Columbus' port
27 Pale yellow
28 EMT technique
30 Cellular device
31 Counting-out start
34 A word to kitty
36 Pimento holder
37 Rouses up
38 Blew a paycheck
43 Heartrending
44 Raise the lid
47 Kind of sale (2 wds.)
49 Auctioned off
50 — laugh or dance
51 Reflection
52 French clerics
53 Stargaze
55 Leaf source
56 Thin Man's terrier
59 House wing
61 Sorority letter
62 -- Mahal
63 Paul Anka's "— Beso"
64 Karate level

Wednesday's answer

S	M	A	L	L	■	S	C	A	B	■	C	H	A	P
C	A	C	A	O	■	H	E	R	R	■	H	E	I	R
O	U	T	D	O	■	E	D	I	E	■	E	L	M	O
O	N	O	■	F	R	E	E	Z	E	D	R	I	E	D
P	A	R	F	A	I	T	■	Z	E	R	O	E	S	■
■	■	■	R	H	O	■	S	P	I	C	Y	■	■	■
M	E	S	A	S	■	S	A	R	E	K	■	R	E	B
A	L	O	U	■	M	I	N	E	R	■	Q	U	A	Y
O	K	S	■	T	O	A	D	Y	■	F	U	G	U	E
■	■	■	W	O	R	M	S	■	B	O	O	■	■	■
P	A	C	I	N	O	■	■	A	R	R	I	V	A	L
S	T	O	N	E	S	T	H	R	O	W	■	O	D	E
A	R	N	E	■	E	R	I	E	■	A	S	I	D	E
L	I	A	R	■	L	I	E	N	■	R	U	L	E	R
M	A	N	Y	■	Y	O	D	A	■	D	E	A	R	S

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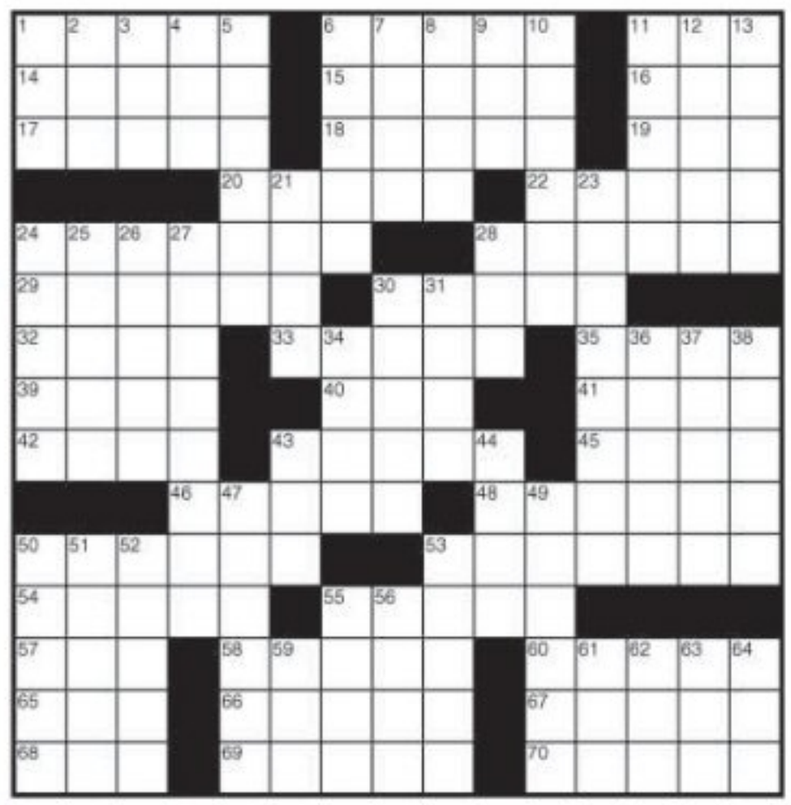

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Red Sox, Orioles win AL East battle at the trade deadline

MLB. Boston and Baltimore made sure their pitching staffs are good to go for the stretch run.

The Rays' official team Twitter account jabbed at the account of the Red Sox this past Monday night after taking over first place in the division with this tweet: "Dear @RedSox scoreboard operator — your standings are wrong. Yours truly, @RaysBaseball."

It's going to be that kind of division race in the AL East for the rest of the year and though the Rays did the talking on July 29, the Red Sox and Orioles won battles in the following days. Boston made one of the biggest acquisitions ahead of the July 31 trade deadline by landing righty starter Jake Peavy. Peavy is a former NL Cy Young Award winner and was 8-4 with a 4.28 ERA on the 2013 season with the White Sox. In 10 of his 13 starts in 2013, he has lasted six innings or more. His best start this year came in May, a complete-game victory over Miami.

"Tremendous competitor. Fearless," Red Sox manager John Farrell said about Peavy to WEEI sports radio's "Salk & Holley." "He is ecstatic about coming into this environment with a chance to compete not only for a playoff berth but also hopefully deep into October."

The Orioles, meanwhile, made one of the better deadline day deals by landing starter Bud Norris from Houston. The 28-year-old Norris owns a wicked fastball and has a 3.93 ERA.

All was quiet for the Rays and Yankees on deadline day, though business should pick up in New York in the next few days with MLB's decision on the future of Alex Rodriguez looming.

Jake Peavy / GETTY IMAGES

MATT BURKE
matthew.burke@metro.us

FANTASY

ADAM LEVITAN, JUST A GUY LIVING THE FANTASY

METRO'S FANTASY GURU BREAKS IT ALL DOWN FOR YOU EVERY WEEK

CAMP BODIES: UPDATE YOUR FANTASY DEPTH CHARTS

These days, it's a miracle if an NFL player can sustain health for an entire 16-game season. Even getting through training camp is proving to be a tall order.

Camp is only a week old, but we've already had three truly devastating injuries. By the time you draft, your opponents will certainly know not to take these wounded souls. But they won't know how to react.

Eddie Money. I led last week's column by naming Dennis Pitta the most undervalued asset in fantasy. Now, he's out for the year. The Ravens will try to compensate by letting tight end Ed Dickson run more routes, but the problem is that he's shown plodding athleticism.

The bigger beneficiary here will be Torrey Smith, who projects as a target monster.

Golden opportunity. Percy Harvin needs hip surgery. He won't return until Week 13 at the earliest. So, the Seahawks will roll with Golden Tate and Sidney Rice as their wideouts. While Rice is declining and dealing with another injury (this time to his knee), Tate is ascending and in a contract year.

Steering clear of Mr. Cooper. The immediate reaction to Jeremy Maclin's torn ACL will be to peg Riley Cooper as a fantasy sleeper.

Don't do it.

Although Cooper will start, he'll do so because Chip Kelly likes his physicality. He excels as a run-blocker and he contests 50-50 balls. Cooper will not be playing every down as a featured receiver.

Racist rants aren't the only reason to stay away from Riley Cooper. / GETTY IMAGES

NFL news

Throughout the spring, Mike Jenkins was the Patriots' starting "X" receiver. Now that camp has started, rookie Aaron Dobson is getting the first-team reps. If he can hang on to that job, he'll emerge as an elite sleeper. Brandon Lloyd played the "X" spot last year and had 130 targets.

MLB pickups

Keep these names in mind if you are looking to tweak your fantasy baseball roster this week:

- Rex Brothers, RP, Rockies. Rafael Betancourt is on the DL again, this time due to an appendectomy. Brothers has standalone value as a setup guy anyway (1.24 ERA).
- Junior Lake, OF, Cubs. Swiped 117 bags over 619 minor-league games. Now he's up and playing every day for the rebuilding Cubs.
- Jake Marisnick, OF, Marlins. Marisnick had 12 homers and 11 swipes in 67 Double-A games this season.

3 SPORTS

Playoff push

Revs back at Gillette

The Revolution will battle with Toronto FC at Gillette Stadium Aug. 4 at 7:30 p.m. Every match for New England from here on out is vital, as the Revs cling to the fifth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. The Revs (8-7-6) seemingly have their second consecutive "bunny," as Toronto FC will arrive in Foxboro with a 3-10-8 record.

Watch online

Find videos and recaps of the Red Sox's series against the Mariners and Diamondbacks: **Metro.us/sports**

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